

**REVIEW AUTHORITY: Robert Strand, Senior Reviewer**

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FULL**

6-30

**Parker, Christine D**

**Sent:** Wednesday, April 20, 2011 10:09 AM  
**To:** 'Miller, Kelley'; Stott, Erinn C; Larsen, Jill K; Ladenson, Jeffrey L; Wilcock, John D (Baghdad)  
**Cc:** 'Adams, Joyce V'; Brown, Katherine; Whitney, Reitz; Parker, Christine D; Jacobs, Susan S  
**Subject:** RE: Christian World Adoption Ethiopia Case Statistics

Hi all, also adding in Ambassador Jacobs since she's mentioned here.

I don't have any good thoughts about how agencies should structure a budget. But many agencies need to focus on something even more elemental – how their money is spent. Many agencies we meet with don't even ask for a regular accounting of the funds they give to an orphanage and are often resistant to our suggestions about regular audits. When we do field investigations, we do look at orphanages' books (if they even have them) and are often shocked at their inability to account for major sums of funds, especially when more than one agency is contributing. Seems to me the ASPs should start with that – orphanages should be able to estimate how much it costs to support each child.

As for exerting greater control over the relinquishment process, again, start from the beginning. Most agencies do not question the dossiers they are given. They don't independently verify the child's history; they don't notice improbabilities (a child found abandoned in the delivery room of a hospital is one recent case that comes to mind); they don't have a basic understanding of what the GOE/USG requires to support a legal adoption; and they have no idea how the local government or orphanage come to find children who are put into the ICA process. There are basic questions that are never asked until cases get to us.

I also have to disagree with Pat Ward that all agencies are doing their best. I think their best can be much better.

My two cents. Abby

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

**From:** Miller, Kelley [mailto:Kelley.Miller@dhs.gov]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 20, 2011 12:45 AM  
**To:** Stott, Erinn C; Larsen, Jill K; Rupp, Abigail M; Ladenson, Jeffrey L; Wilcock, John D  
**Cc:** Adams, Joyce V; Brown, Katherine; Whitney, Reitz; Miller, Kelley  
**Subject:** FW: Christian World Adoption Ethiopia Case Statistics

Erin, Jill, Abby, Jeff, John, et all,

I wanted to pass on Ms. Ward's thanks for all the energy and effort that has been put into Ethiopian adoptions and the statistics for CWA.

I could also use your help in responding to Ms. Ward's questions posed below.

Any answers/insight you can provide will be much appreciated.

Many thanks,

*Kelley K. Miller*

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**From:** Patricia Ward [mailto:patriciaw@cwa.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 12, 2011 10:05 AM  
**To:** Engagement, Public  
**Subject:** FW: Christian World Adoption Ethiopia Case Statistics

In response to the request from Whitney Reitz for feedback on last Wednesday's meeting of Ethiopian stakeholders in Washington, D.C., I am providing the statistics for Christian World Adoption in comparison to the data collected by the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa. As you can readily see, our ratios are pretty much in alignment with the averages with the exception of our placement of older children. As Scott Brown from Gladney indicated for his organization, CWA also believes that older children should have the opportunity for adoption just as much as the younger ones and we dedicate much effort in that regard.

I appreciated very much the presentation by the State Department and USCIS as we continue to collaborate on ways to make the adoption process in Ethiopia more transparent and ethical. I personally would like to commend Abby Rupp and her adoption team for hosting the trainings sessions that have been so valuable not only for our agency representatives in country, but also for our partner orphanages to attend. I am sure that there are abuses in the system. However, our experience as an agency is that in dealing with orphanages in poor, rural areas we struggle to get documents without the simplest clerical errors sent to our staff who review them for accuracy and consistency. I totally agree that the embassy's insistence on clearing up all the inconsistencies and typographical errors prior to submitting documents for their review should streamline the process and allow them the time they need to investigate the more problematic cases.

I do have a couple of questions and a comment. First of all, given that Ethiopia has no central authority to set fees and monitor orphanages – how does the State Department and USCIS suggest that adoption agencies structure a budget without doing so on a ratio per referrals basis? International fees are based on adoptions completed. We cannot generate budgets out of thin air. Aside from our agency support of staff in country, the vast majority of our international fees goes to support the various orphanage partners and their humanitarian work in the community. What we are actually experiencing is that while children home numbers are decreasing, our actual budgetary support for partner orphanages continues to rise due to inflation and government mandated community support programs. If you can tell us how to solve this dilemma, we would love to hear your insight!

Secondly, since adoption service providers are not supposed to be involved in the relinquishment process of children due to conflict of interest – how exactly do you suggest that we exert greater control over that very process? When our CWAE investigators have gone into local communities to follow up on specific cases, they have not been met with a welcoming attitude. The processing of documents in Ethiopia is very much a relational thing and having someone come in from outside the community asking questions of the officials has not worked very well for us. We do find that we can exert greater influence and training over the partner organization with which we have a one-on-one relationship. And incidentally, that organization is continually being recognized by the Ethiopian government as a model orphanage for other NGO's operating in Southern Ethiopia.

Finally, I would like to comment on Ambassador Jacobs' suggestion that adoptive parents do their due diligence for the pre-approval process by researching adoption agencies and making sure that they are dealing with an ethical agency. While I agree with her in theory, I am also well aware of how agencies can be criticized by anyone and cannot offer a response due to laws of confidentiality. Christian World Adoption has been not only a lightning rod for what is perceived to be wrong with adoptions in Ethiopia, but has also served as a scapegoat to some measure. We hear the horror stories, too, and we know that we are not responsible for more than a fraction of them. We just happened to be the one organization named in a sloppy, sensationalized piece of journalism. If 90% of the adoptions being done in Ethiopia are being done by Hague Accredited adoption agencies, then one has to believe that most of us are doing our best to work for the benefit of the children in less than perfect circumstances. We would love to feel like we are participating in an effort that really is a collaborative one rather than an accusatory one. If members of the State Department and USCIS still have questions about the allegations from the Fly Away Children documentary, then we would welcome the opportunity to present our response to those allegations.

Ambassador Jacobs also commented that parents should get out there and see what is being said about various agencies in order to determine their ethics. Unfortunately, parents can say anything in a public forum and not have to back it up with facts. I was made aware just today of a website that gave their very first "Demons of Adoptions Awards" to the National Council for Adoption. After Bethany received the next award, Christian World Adoption and Gladney both lost out to JCICS for the distinction of the award this year. If parents are going to truly do their due diligence, then they need to look beneath some of the slanderous attacks being made on good, reputable organizations and not take these character assassinations at face value. There are plenty of detractors to go around.

Thank you again for hosting this ongoing forum for the improvement of the adoption process in Ethiopia. I trust that all of us working together will be able to improve the lives of the vulnerable children that need our advocacy.

Sincerely,

Patricia Ward  
CWA Executive Director

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